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INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 7104  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0328  
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 0660  
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5219  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 4932  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1546  
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RHMFIUU/39OS INCIRLIK AB TU  
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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL  
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2006

#### In Today's Papers

Turkey to Submit New Anti-Terror Bill to Parliament  
All papers: Justice Minister and Cabinet Spokesman Cemil Cicek announced after the council of ministers meeting Monday that a new anti-terror draft bill would be submitted to the parliament for approval soon. According to the new bill, parents who allow their children to join demonstrations and carry out propaganda work such as carrying the flags of separatist terrorist organizations will be punished with up to five years in prison. Security forces will be authorized to do searches and to suspend the free movement of people without getting permission from the prosecutor. The new regulation brings heavy penalties for those printing or airing statements supportive of terrorism. Cicek said deficiencies in the laws will be removed in an effort to strengthen security forces in the struggle against terrorists.

Iranian Hizbullah Leader Threatens Turkey  
All papers: In an interview with Turkey's all-news station NTV, The Iranian Hizbullah's leader Kharrazi warned countries against cooperating with the United States in a possible attack on Iran, threatening that they will attack Turkey too if Turks assist the US against Iran. Describing the retaliation against the US for after an attack, Kharrazi said, "We will use our men who have settled in the US. If war breaks out, you will see that even the children of some US senators will join us in suicide attacks."

Writing in the Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak, Akif Emre argues that the US is hiding its real motives regarding Iran: "Presenting the current crisis as an issue between a fundamentalist regime with nuclear power on one hand and the civilized world on the other is part of a psychological campaign against Iran. The major objective here is the reshaping of the Middle East, with the fight against terror

serving only as an excuse. The North Korea example and Israel's ongoing nuclear program provide proof. All of this is about US efforts to gain full control over the region and create a new imperial system, enhancing American power both politically and militarily."

"Islamophobia" on the Rise in Europe  
Hurriyet, Milliyet and Yeni Safak cite the European press in reporting a rise in "Islamophobia" in Europe with mosques set on fire, imams intimidated, and many Muslims subjected to ethnic discrimination and intolerance. The British Independent reported that following the 7/7 attacks in London last year, groupings such as the British National Party and the National Front had been spreading a message of racial hatred, adding that the government's war against terror had stirred hate speech and crimes. A poll conducted by the Germany-based Turkey Studies Center (TAM) with 1,000 German nationals shows 24 percent of those surveyed see Islam as directly linked to terrorism, and 40 percent see a clash of civilizations as "inevitable." TAM said surveys carried out in the Netherlands and Austria resulted in even higher percentages to the above mentioned questions. A separate survey conducted of 1,000 Turks living in Germany showed that 30 percent of those interviewed want to return to Turkey in the face of rising Islamophobia in Germany.

Turkish Court Rules against Compulsory Religious Education  
Hurriyet, Radikal, Cumhuriyet: A court in Istanbul, in line with the request of an Alevi Muslim family, ruled that compulsory religious classes cannot be enforced in Turkish schools, stressing that the Constitution and Article 9 of the European Human Rights Convention granted freedom of

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worship for all. The Alevi organizations called on Alevi families to apply to courts to have their children exempted from religious classes. Istanbul Governor's Office objected to the ruling. Papers note that in practice, Jewish and Christian students had been exempted from religious classes in Turkey, which teach a Sunni interpretation of Islam.

Turkish Unemployment Rate Stands at 20 Percent  
Cumhuriyet: Turkish National Productivity Center (MPM) claimed the real unemployment rate stood at 20 percent in Turkey, and not at 10 percent as official announcements have earlier said. "About 7 million out of the total labor force of 22 million work in the agriculture sector in Turkey. Some 3.5 million of these work for their family companies without getting regularly paid. And some 2 million of the total work force, which constitutes 10 percent, are unofficially employed [working simply on a cash basis]. Thus, the real unemployment figure is at 20 percent in Turkey," MPM said.

TV Highlights  
NTV (8 a.m)

Domestic News

- Yalcin Ozbey, the Turkish fugitive implicated in the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II, has not been set free in Belgium. The Turkish Foreign Ministry is expected to demand extradition of Ozbey.

- Environment Ministry specialists continue removing barrels containing toxic waste buried in the Tuzla neighborhood in Istanbul.

International News

- A Palestinian suicide bomber killed nine people and injured some 50 others in downtown Tel Aviv. President Abbas denounced the attack whereas Hamas said it was a legitimate act of self-defense.

- The Washington Post claimed the Pentagon has been

preparing for a full scale war with Iran for three years.

- A Newsweek article said PM Erdogan and his ruling AK Party have shifted to nationalism. To the discontent of Brussels, Erdogan is busy strengthening Turkey's ties with the Islamic world.

- Witnesses at the trial of Saddam Hussein said at a hearing Monday the former Iraqi tyrant signed documents allowing the killing of 148 Shiites in the 1980s.

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